

State Cost Share – Thirty Years Strong

Cost share is a fantastic program to help cooperators control erosion on their farms. There is hardly a cooperator who has not benefited from this great cost share program. Not only do farmers take part by providing at least 50% of their own dollars, but many times it is an incentive to do several additional projects.

Cost-share dollars change hands several times within each of our communities. Once the contractors pull into the field to do the work, fuel is needed for the equipment, insurance coverage is required, repair persons are necessary and, in turn, each of these businesses pay their bills with the dollars collected from the cooperators and state cost share. This provides a major economic stimulus in our local communities.

There are so many cost share programs for our customers to avail themselves. To name a few: terracing, contour strip-cropping, windbreaks, water and sediment basins, pasture and hay land planting, waterways and buffers.

As Soil and Water Commissioners, we have the opportunity to combine state cost share projects with both the federal and the county programs to protect soil and improve water quality. These practices are all protected by the cooperator with 20 year maintenance agreements under the watchful eye of soil and water commissioners, NRCS staff and State technicians. The last 30 years have had a significant influence on agriculture in the state of Iowa by helping to keep our rich topsoil out of the streams and retained on our farms. We must continue to work together to promote an increase of moneys and uses for our cost share program. We will build a better tomorrow working together to keep these valuable commodities for future generations.

I personally want to thank former Governor Robert Ray and the state legislators for their positive and proactive approach to setting Iowa as the first state in the nation to have a cost share program. We continue to have governors and legislators who are leaders for conservation. The time is NOW. Let's be ready for an even bigger and better celebration in the year 2023 when we have 50 years of cost share under our belt.

Bernie Bolton, President
Conservation Districts of Iowa
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